Statement of the Council's reasons: Position (EU) No 15/2016 of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 91/2003 on rail transport statistics, as regards the collection of data on goods, passengers and accidents

(2016/C 358/02)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 30 August 2013, the Commission submitted to the Council and the European Parliament a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 91/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2002 on rail transport statistics, as regards the collection of data on goods, passengers and accidents.

2. The first reading position of the European Parliament was adopted in the Plenary on 11 March 2014.

3. An informal trilogue meeting took place on 25 November 2014 with representatives of the three institutions. During this meeting, a compromise text was agreed.

4. On 19 December 2014, Coreper took note but did not endorse the compromise reached during the trilogue, the main issue being the compulsory pilot studies to be conducted by Member States.

5. Intense informal negotiations then took place between the successive Presidencies: LV, LU and NL with the European Parliament and the Commission.

6. On 24 May 2016, a final informal trilogue took place between the three institutions where an agreement was eventually reached on a final compromise text.

7. On 3 June 2016, the Permanent Representatives' Committee confirmed this agreement on the final compromise text in annex with a view to reaching an early second reading agreement on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 91/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2002 on rail transport statistics, as regards the collection of data on goods, passengers and accidents.

8. The Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) agreed on the text reflecting the result of the mandate and on 15 June 2016, the Chair of the Committee addressed a letter to the President of the Permanent Representatives Committee, stating that, if the Council adopts its position at first reading in accordance with the text as annexed to their letter and which has been confirmed by Coreper on 3 June 2016, he would recommend to the Plenary that the Council's position be accepted without amendment, subject to legal-linguistic verification, at Parliament's second reading.

II. OBJECTIVE

9. The purpose of the draft regulation is to to modify Regulation (EC) No 91/2003 in order to update, simplify and optimise the existing legal framework for European statistics on rail transport and to align it with the new institutional context.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE COMMON POSITION

10. Following the vote in Plenary, the European Parliament and the Council conducted negotiations with the aim of concluding an early second-reading agreement on the basis of a Council first reading position that the Parliament could approve as such. The text of the Council's first reading position fully reflects the compromise reached between the co-legislators.

11. The main key issue between both institutions was the European Parliament request for additional data in particular concerning safety, accessibility and abandoned cross-border rail points. Most of the data requested are already collected by other Commission services or agencies. A consensus was eventually reached as the signature of two memoranda, one between Eurostat and DG Move and one between Eurostat and the European Rail Agency, gave the European Parliament the guarantee that the data they requested are dealt with and will be easily available to the public. A new recital has also been added underlining the need for a close cooperation between the Commission and the relevant entities with a view to providing easily accessible and useful information to Union citizens and other stakeholders on rail transport safety and interoperability of the rail system.

IV. **CONCLUSION**

12. The Council's position fully reflects the compromise reached in the negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council, with the agreement of the Commission. The compromise is confirmed by the letter that the Chair of the TRAN committee addressed to the Chairman of the Permanent Representatives Committee on 15 June 2016.